collated
& perfect.
J.B.K. 1798

THE CUT MISER.

FOR THE USE OF

PRIVATE THEATRES.

By Edward Tighe Esq.re

First Edition.

SECTO CORPORE FORTIOR.

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M.DCC.LXXXVIII.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LOVEGOLD, the Miser.
FREDERICK, his Son.
RAMILIE, Servant to Frederick.
Mr. DECOY, a Broker.
Mr. FURNISH, an Upholsterer.
Mr. SPARKLE, a Jeweller.
Mr. SATTIN, a Mercer.
Mr. LIST, a Taylor.
A LAWYER.
JAMES.

Mrs. WISELY.
MARIANA.
LAPPET, Maid to Mariana.

SERVANTS, *&c.*

SCENE, *LONDON.*

THE MISER.

ACT FIRST.

Enter LOVEGOLD *and* RAMILIE.

LOVEGOLD.

ANSWER me not, Sirrah, but get you out of my houſe.

Ram. Sir, I am your ſon's ſervant, and not your's, Sir, and I won't go out of the houſe, unleſs I am turned out by my proper maſter, Sir.

Love. Sirrah, I'll turn your maſter out after you, like an extravagant raſcal as he is: he has no need of a ſervant while he is in my houſe; and here he dreſſes out a fellow at more expence than a prudent man might clothe a large family at. 'Tis plain enough what uſe he keeps you for; but I will have no ſpy upon my affairs, no raſcal continually prying into all my actions, devouring all I have, and hunting about in every corner to ſee what he may ſteal.

Ram. Steal! a likely thing indeed, to ſteal from a man who locks up every thing he has, and ſtands ſentry upon it day and night!

Love. I'm all over in a ſweat leſt this fellow ſhould ſuſpect ſomething of my money—*(aſide)*.—Hark'e, raſcal, come hither: I would adviſe you not to run about the town and tell every body you meet that I have money hid.

Ram. Why, have you any money hid, Sir?

Love. No, Sirrah, I don't ſay I have; but you may raiſe ſuch a report nevertheleſs.

Ram. 'Tis equal to me whether you have money hid or no, ſince I cannot find it.

Love. D'ye mutter, Sirrah? get you out of my houſe, I ſay—get you out this inſtant.

Ram. Well, Sir, I am going.

Love. Come back: let me deſire you not to carry any thing away with you.

Ram. What ſhould I carry?

Love. That's what I would ſee. This high ſtiff cape is certainly intended to be receivers of ſtolen goods, and I wiſh the taylor had been hanged who invented them. Turn your pockets inſide out, if you pleaſe; but you are too practiſed a rogue to put any thing there. Theſe damn'd bags have had many a good thing in them, I warrant you.

Ram. Give me my bag, Sir; I am in the moſt danger of being robbed.

Love. Come, come, be honeſt, and return what thou haſt taken from me.

Ram. Ay, Sir, that I could do with all my heart, for I have taken nothing from you but blows.

Love. And haſt thou really ſtolen nothing?

Ram. No really, Sir.

Love. Then get out of my houſe whilſt all is well, and go to the devil.

Ram. Ay, any where from ſuch an old coveteous curmudgeon. *Exit.*

Love. So there's one plague gone. Now I will go pay a viſit to the dear caſket.

Enter FREDERICK.

Love. I muſt find ſome ſafer place to depoſite three thouſand guineas in, which I received yeſterday; three thouſand guineas are a ſum——Oh, Heavens! I have betrayed myſelf! my paſſion has tranſported me to talk aloud, and I have been overheard. How now! what's the matter?

Fred. The matter, Sir!

Love. Yes, the matter, Sir! I ſuppoſe you can repeat more of my words than theſe; I ſuppoſe you have overheard——

Fred. What, Sir?

Love. That——

Fred. Sir!

Love. What I was juſt now ſaying.

Fred. Pardon me, Sir, I really did not.

Love. Well, I ſee you did overhear ſomething, and ſo I will tell you the whole: I was ſaying to myſelf, in this great ſcarcity of money, what a happineſs it would be to have three thouſand guineas by one: I tell you this that you might not miſunderſtand me, and imagine I ſaid I had three thouſand guineas.

Fred.

Fred. I enter not into your affairs, Sir.

Love. Ah, would I had thoſe three thouſand guineas!

Fred. In my opinion, Sir——

Love. It would make my affairs extremely eaſy.

Fred. Then it is very eaſily in your power to raiſe 'em, Sir; that all the world knows.

Love. I raiſe 'em! I raiſe three thouſand guineas! eaſily! my child is my greateſt enemy, and will by his way of talking, and by the extravagant expences he runs into, be the occaſion that one of theſe days ſomebody will cut my throat, imagining me to be made up of nothing but guineas.

Fred. What expence, Sir, do I run into?

Love. How have you the aſſurance to aſk me that, Sir, when if one was but to pick thoſe fine feathers of your's off from head to foot one might purchaſe a very comfortable annuity out of them A fellow here with a very good fortune upon his back wonders that he is called extravagant. In ſhort, Sir, you muſt rob me to appear in this manner.

Fred. How, Sir! rob you?

Love. Ay, rob me, or how could you ſupport this extravagance?

Fred. Alas, Sir, there are fifty young fellows of my acquaintance that ſupport greater extravagancies, and no one knows how. Ah, Sir, there are ten thouſand pretty ways of living in this town without robbing one's father.

Love. What neceſſity is there for all that lace on your coat? and all bought at the firſt hand too, I warrant you. If you will be fine, is there not ſuch a place as Monmouth-ſtreet in this town, where a man may buy a ſuit for the third part of the ſum

which

which his taylor demands. And then ſuch an expence in ridiculous hair-dreſſing, when you may purchaſe a genteel perriwig in Middle-row for five ſhillings, which might laſt half your life.

Fred. Sir, I have been thinking of an affair of conſequence to mention to you.

Love. And I have an affair of conſequence to mention to you. Pray, Sir, you who are a fine gentleman, and converſe much amongſt the ladies, what think you of a certain young lady called Mariana?

Fred. Mariana, Sir!

Love. Ay, what do you think of her?

Fred. Think of her, Sir!

Love. Why do you repeat my words? Ay, what do you think of her?

Fred. Why, I think her the moſt charming woman in the world.

Love. Would ſhe not be a deſirable match?

Fred. So deſirable that, in my opinion, her huſband will be the happieſt of mankind.

Love. Does ſhe not promiſe to make a good houſewife?

Fred. Oh, the beſt houſewife upon earth.

Love. Might not a huſband, think ye, live very eaſy and happy with her?

Fred. Doubtleſs, Sir.

Love. There's one thing I'm a little afraid of, that is, that ſhe has not quite ſo much fortune as one might fairly expect.

Fred. Oh, Sir! conſider but her merit, and you may eaſily make an abatement in his fortune. For

Heaven's

Heaven's ſake, Sir, don't let that prevent your deſign. Fortune is nothing in compariſon with her beauty and merit.

Love. Pardon me there, however, there may be ſome matters found, perhaps, to make up ſome little deficiency; and if you would, to oblige your father, retrench your extravagancies on this occaſion, perhaps this difference in ſome time might be made up.

Fred. My deareſt father! I'll bid adieu to all extravagance for ever.

Love. Thou art a dutiful good boy; and ſince I find you have the ſame ſentiments with me, provided ſhe can but make a pretty tolerable fortune, I am even reſolved to marry her.

Fred. Ha! you reſolved to marry Mariana!

Love. Ay, to marry Mariana.

Fred. Who? you, you, you.

Love. Yes, I, I, I.

Fred. I beg you will pardon me, Sir; a ſudden dizzineſs has ſeized me, I muſt beg leave to retire.

[*Exit Fred.*

Love. This is what I have reſolved upon for myſelf, as for my ſon, I have a certain widow in my eye for him.—Ha! is not that the barking of a dog? ſome villains are in ſearch of my money.

[*Exit.*

FREDERICK, RAMILIE.

Fred. What is the reaſon, Sir, you have been out of the way, when I gave you orders to ſtay here?

Ram. Yes, Sir, and here did I ſtay, according to your orders, till your good father turned me out; and

and it is now, at the extreme hazard of a cudgel, that I return back again.

Fred. Well, and what anſwer have you brought touching the money?

Ram. Ah, Sir, it is a terrible thing to borrow money! a man muſt have dealt with the devil to deal with a ſcrivener.

Fred. Then it won't do, I ſuppoſe.

Ram. Pardon me, Sir, Mr. Decoy the broker, is a moſt induſtrious perſon; he ſays he has done every thing in his power to ſerve you, for he has taken a particular fancy to your honour.

Fred. So then I ſhall have the five hundred, ſhall I?

Ram. Yes, Sir; but there are ſome trifling conditions which your honour muſt ſubmit to before the affair can be finiſhed.

Fred. Did he bring you to the ſpeech of the perſon that is to lend the money?

Ram. Ah, Sir! things are not managed in that manner; he takes more care to conceal himſelf than you do; there are greater myſteries in theſe matters than you imagine: why, he would not ſo much as tell me the lender's name, and he is to bring him to-day to talk with you in ſome third perſon's houſe, to learn from your own mouth the particulars of your eſtate and family. I dare ſwear the very name of your father will make all things eaſy.

Fred. Chiefly the death of my mother, whoſe jointure no one can hinder me of.

Ram. Here, Sir, I have brought the articles; Mr. Decoy told me he took 'em from the mouth of the perſon himſelf; your honour will find them extremely reaſonable—" The broker was forced to

" ſtickle

"ſtickle hard to get ſuch good ones." In the firſt place, the lender is to ſee all his ſecurities, and the borrower muſt be of age, and heir apparent to a large eſtate without flaw in the title, and entirely free from all incumbrance; and that the lender may run as little riſk as poſſible, the borrower muſt enſure his life for the ſum lent; if he be an officer in the army he is to make over his whole pay for the payment of both principal and intereſt, which, that the lender may not burden his conſcience with any ſcruples, is to be no more than thirty per cent.

Fred. Oh, the conſcientious raſcal!

Ram. But as the ſaid lender has not by him at preſent the ſum demanded, and that to oblige the borrower he is himſelf forced to borrow of another at the rate of four per cent. he thinks it but reaſonable that the firſt borrower, over and above the thirty per cent. aforeſaid, ſhall alſo pay this four per cent. ſince it is for his ſervice only that this ſum is borrowed.

Fred. Oh, the devil! what a Jew is here?

Ram. You know, Sir, what you have to do—he can't oblige you to theſe terms.

Fred. Nor can I oblige him to lend me the money without them; and you know that I muſt have it, let the conditions be what they may.

Ram. Ay, Sir, why that was what I told him.

Fred. Did you ſo, raſcal? No wonder he inſiſts on ſuch conditions, if you laid open my neceſſities to him?

Ram. Alas, Sir, I only told it to the broker, who is your friend, and has your intereſt very much at hand.

Fred. Well, is this all; or are there any more reaſonable articles?

Ram.

Ram. Of the five hundred pounds required, the lender can pay down in cash no more than four hundred, and for the reſt the borrower muſt take in goods.

Fred. Confound the curſt extortioner! I ſhall pay one hundred per cent.

Ram. Ah, Sir! I wiſh your honour would conſider of it in time.

Enter LOVEGOLD *and* DECOY.

Decoy. In ſhort, Sir, he is a very extravagant young fellow, and ſo preſſed by his neceſſities that you may bring him to what terms you pleaſe.

Love. But do you think, Mr. Decoy, there is no danger? do you know the name, the family, and the eſtate of the borrower?

Decoy. No, I cannot give you any perfect information yet; for it was by the greateſt accident in the world that he was recommended to me; but you will learn all theſe particulars from his own lips, and his man aſſured me you would make no difficulty the moment you knew the name of his father: all that I can tell you is, that his ſervant ſays the old gentleman is extremely rich; he called him a covetous old raſcal.

Love. Ay, that is the name which thoſe ſpendthrifts, and the rogues their ſervants, give to all prudent honeſt men, who know the world and the value of their money.

Decoy. This young gentleman is an only ſon, and is ſo little afraid of any future competitors, that he offers to be bound, if you inſiſt on it, that his father ſhall die within eight months.

Love. Ay! there's ſomething in that; I believe then I ſhall let him have the money. Charity, Mr. Decoy, charity obliges us to ſerve our neighbours, I ſay, when we are no loſers by it.

Decoy. Very true, indeed.

Ram. Hey day! what can be the meaning of this? our broker talking with the old gentleman!

Decoy. So, gentlemen, I ſee you are in great haſte: but who told you, pray, that this was the lender? I aſſure you, Sir, I neither diſcovered your name, nor your houſe: but, however, there is no great harm done; they are people of diſcretion, ſo you may freely tranſact this affair now.

Love. How!

Decoy. This, Sir, is the gentleman that wants to borrow the five hundred pounds.

Love. How, raſcal! is it you that abandon yourſelf to theſe intolerable extravagancies?

Fred. I muſt even ſtand buff, and outface him—*(aſide)*.—And is it you, father, that diſgrace yourſelf, by theſe ſcandalous extortions?

[*Ramilie and Decoy ſneaks off.*

Love. Is it you that would ruin yourſelf, by taking up money at ſuch intereſt?

Fred. Is it you that would enrich yourſelf by lending at ſuch intereſt?

Love. How dare you, after this, appear before my face?

Fred. How dare you, after this, appear before the face of the world?

Love. Get you out of my ſight, villain! get out of my ſight.

Fred. Sir, I go; but give me leave to ſay——

Love.

Love. I'll not hear a word: I'll prevent your attempting any thing of this nature for the future.—Begone!—I am not ſorry for this accident; it will make me henceforth keep a ſtricter eye over his actions. [*Exeunt.*

Enter RAMILIE *and* LAPPET.

Lap. This was indeed a moſt unlucky accident; however, I dare lay a wager I ſhall ſucceed better with him, and get ſome of thoſe guineas you would have borrowed.

Ram. I am not, Madam, now to learn Mrs. Lappet's dexterity; but if you get any thing out of him, I ſhall think you a match for the devil. Sooner than to extract gold from him, I would engage to extract religion from a hypocrite, honeſty from a lawyer, health from a phyſician, ſincerity from a courtier, or modeſty from a poet.——I think, my dear, you have liv'd long enough in this houſe to know that gold is a very dear commodity here.

Lap. Ah, but there are ſome certain ſervices which will ſqueeze it out of the cloſeſt hands. There is one trade, which, I thank Heaven, I'm no ſtranger to, wherein all men are dabblers; and he who will ſcarce afford himſelf either meat or cloaths, will pay for the commodities I deal in.

Ram. Your humble ſervant, Madam: I find you don't know our good maſter yet: "There is not "a woman in the world who loves to hear her pretty "ſelf talk ever ſo much, but you may eaſier ſhut "her mouth than open his hands, as for thanks, "praiſes, and promiſes, no courtier upon earth is "more liberal of them; but for money, not *one* "penny: there's nothing ſo dry as his careſſes;" and there is no huſband who hates the word *wife*

half so much as his does the word *give*; instead of saying, "I *give* you a good-morrow," he always says, "I *lend* you a good-morrow."

Lap. Ah, Sir! let me alone to drain a man; I have the secret to open his heart, and his purse too.

Ram. I defy you to drain the man we talk of out of his money; he loves that more than any thing you can procure him in exchange; "the very sight "of a creditor throws him into convulsions; 'tis "touching him in the only sensible parts; 'tis pierc-"ing his heart, tearing out his vitals, to ask him "for a farthing." But here he is, and, if you get a shilling out of him, I'll marry you without any other fortune. [*Exit.*

Enter LOVEGOLD.

Love. All's well hitherto; my dear money is safe. Is it you, Lappet?

Lap. I should rather ask, if it be you, Sir?—Why, you look so young and vigorous.

Love. Do I, do I?

Lap. Why, you grow younger and younger every day, Sir; you never look'd half so young in your life, as you do now. Why, Sir, I know fifty young fellows of five-and-twenty that are older than you are.

Love. That may be, that may be, Lappet, considering the lives they lead; and yet I am a good ten years above fifty.

Lap. Well, what's ten years above fifty? 'tis the very flower of a man's age. Why, Sir, you are now in the very prime of your life.

Love.

Love. Very true, that's very true, as to underſtanding; but I am afraid could I take off twenty years it would do me no harm with the ladies, Lappet, How goes on our affair with Mariana? have you mentioned any thing about what her mother can give her? for in theſe extravagant times no prudent man marries a woman unleſs ſhe brings ſomething with her beſides her petticoat.

Lap. Sir! why, Sir, this young lady will be worth to you as good a thouſand pounds a year as ever was told.

Love. How! a thouſand pounds a year?

Lap. Yes, Sir; there's, in the firſt place, the articles of a table; ſhe has a very little ſtomach, ſhe does not eat above an ounce in a fortnight; and then as to the quality of what ſhe eats, you have no need of a French cook upon her account; as for ſweetmeats, ſhe mortally hates them; ſo there is the article of deſſerts wiped off all at once—you'll have no need of a confectioner, who would be eternally bringing in bills for preſerves, conſerves, biſcuits, comfits, and jellies, of which half a dozen ladies would ſwallow you ten pounds worth at a meal: this, I think, we may very moderately reckon at two hundred pounds a year at leaſt.——Item, for clothes; ſhe has been bred up in ſuch a plainneſs in them, that ſhould we allow but for three birth-night ſuits a year ſaved, which are the leaſt a town lady would expect; there go a good two hundred pounds a year more: for jewels (of which ſhe hates the very ſight) the yearly intereſt of what you muſt lay out in them would amount to one hundred pounds. Laſtly, ſhe has an utter deteſtation of play, at which I have known ſeveral moderate ladies loſe a good two thouſand pounds a year: now let us take only the fourth part of that, which amounts to five hundred; to which if we add two hundred pounds on

the table account, two hundred pounds in clothes, and one hundred pounds in jewels, there is, Sir, your thouſand pounds a year in hard money.

Love. Ay, ay, theſe are pretty things, it muſt be confeſſed, very pretty things; but there's nothing real in 'em.

Lap. How, Sir! is it not ſomething real to bring you in marriage a vaſt ſtore of ſobriety, the inheritance of a great love for ſimplicity of dreſs, and a vaſt acquired fund of hatred for play?

Love. This is downright raillery, Lappet, to make me up a fortune out of the expences ſhe won't put me to; I aſſure you, Madam, I ſhall give no acquittance for what I have not received: in ſhort, Lappet, I muſt touch, touch, touch ſomething real.

Lap. Never fear, you ſhall touch ſomething real. I have heard them talk of a certain country where ſhe has a very pretty freehold, which ſhall be put into your hands.

Love. Nay, if it were a copyhold, I ſhould be glad to touch it: but there is another thing that diſturbs me. You know this girl is young, and young people generally love one another's company: it would ill agree with a perſon of my temper to keep an aſſembly for all the young rakes and flaunting girls in town.

Lap. Ah, Sir, how little do you know of her! this is another particularity that I had to tell you of. She has a moſt terrible averſion for all young people, and loves none but people of your years.—I would adviſe you above all things to take care not to appear young; ſhe inſiſts on ſixty at leaſt: why, ſhe broke off a match t'other day, becauſe her lover was but fifty, and pretended to ſign the marriage articles without ſpectacles.

Love.

Love. This humour is a little ſtrange, methinks.

Lap. She carries it farther, Sir, than can be imagined: She has in her chamber ſeveral pictures; but what do you think they are? none of your ſmock faced young fellows, your Adoniſes, your Cephaluſes, your Pariſes, and your Apollos: no, Sir, you ſee nothing there but your handſome figures of Saturn, King Priam, old Neſtor, and good father Anchiſes upon his ſon's ſhoulders.

Love. Admirable! this is more than I could have hoped. To ſay the truth, had I been a woman, I ſhould never have loved young fellows.

Lap. I believe you. What a folly, indeed, to be in love with young fellows! pretty maſters, with their fine complexions and their fine feathers! Now, I ſhould be glad to taſte the ſavour that is in any of them.

[*Here Lappet introduces a ſong.*

Love. And do you really think me tolerable?

Lap. Tolerable! you are raviſhing!—I—if your picture was drawn by a good hand, Sir, it would be invaluable! "Turn about a little, if you pleaſe:" "There, what can be more charming!" Let me ſee you walk; there's a perſon for you! tall, ſtraight, free, and degagée! Why, Sir, you have no fault about you.

Love. Not many; hem, hem; not many, I thank Heaven; only a few rheumatic pains now and then, and a ſmall catarrh that ſeizes me ſometimes, which, as I have already had it ten years, cannot certainly laſt muſt longer.

Lap. Ah, Sir, that's nothing; your catarrh ſits very well upon you, and you cough with a very good grace.

Love.

Love. But tell me, what does Mariana ſay of my perſon?

Lap. She has a particular pleaſure in talking of it; and I aſſure you, Sir, I have not been backward on all ſuch occaſions to blazon forth your merit, and to make her ſenſible how advantageous a match you will be to her.

Love. You did very well, and I am obliged to you.

Lap. But, Sir, I have a ſmall favour to aſk of you. I have a law-ſuit depending, which I am on the very brink of loſing for want of a little money;—*(He looks gravely)*—and you could eaſily procure my ſucceſs if you had the leaſt friendſhip for me. You can't imagine, Sir, the pleaſure ſhe takes in talking of you;—*(He looks pleaſed)*.——Ah! how you will delight her!—how your venerable mien will charm her! ſhe never will be able to withſtand you. But indeed, Sir, this law-ſuit will be of terrible conſequence to me;—*(He looks grave again)*——I am ruined if I loſe it, which a very ſmall matter might prevent. Ah, Sir, had you but ſeen the raptures with which ſhe heard me talk of you!—*(He reſumes his gaiety*—how pleaſure ſparkled in her eyes at the recital of your good qualities! In ſhort, to diſcover a ſecret to you which I promiſed to conceal, I have worked up her imagination till ſhe is downright impatient of having the match concluded.

Love. Lappet, you have acted a very friendly part; and I own that I have all the obligations in the world to you.

Lap. I beg you will give me this little aſſiſtance, Sir;—*(He looks ſerious)*—it will ſet me on my feet, and I ſhall be eternally obliged to you.

Love. Farewell; I'll go and finiſh my letters.

Lap.

Lap. I assure you, Sir, you would never assist me in a greater necessity.

Love. I must go give some orders about a particular affair.

Lap. I would not importune you, Sir, if I was not forced by the last extremity.

Love. I expect the taylor about turning my coat. Don't you think this coat will look well enough turned, with new buttons, for a wedding-suit?

Lap. For pity's sake, Sir, don't refuse me this small favour: I shall be undone indeed, Sir: if it were but so small a matter as ten pounds, Sir.

Love. I think I hear the taylor's voice.

Lap. If it were but five pounds, Sir; but three pounds, Sir! nay, Sir, a single guinea would be of service for a day or two. *(As he offers to go out on either side she intercepts him.)*

Love. I must go; I can't stay. Hark there, somebody calls me. I'm very much obliged to you, indeed I'm very much obliged to you. [*Exit.*

Lap. Go to the devil, to the gallows like a covetous good-for-nothing villain as you are! Ramilie is in the right: however, I shall not quit the affair; for though I get nothing out of him, I am sure of my reward from the other side.

Fools only to one party will confide,
Good politicians will both parties guide,
And if one fails, they're feed on t'other side.

[*Exit.*

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT

ACT SECOND.

Enter JAMES *and* LOVEGOLD.

JAMES.

DID you send for me, Sir?

Love. Where have you been? for I have wanted you above an hour.

James. Whom, Sir, did you want? your coachman, or your cook? for I am both.

Love. I want my cook, Sir.

James. I thought indeed it was not your coachman; for you have had no occaſion for him ſince your laſt pair of geldings were ſtarved. (You may remember *who* was catch'd ſtealing their hay.) But your cook, Sir, ſhall wait on you in an inſtant.

[*Puts off his coachman's great-coat, and appears as a cook.*]

Love. What's the meaning of this folly?

James. I am ready for your commands, Sir.

Love. I am engaged this evening to give a ſupper.

James. A ſupper, Sir! I have not heard the word this half year; I have indeed now and then heard of ſuch a thing as a dinner; but for a ſupper, I have not dreſs'd one ſo long, that I am afraid my hand is out.

Love.

Love. Leave off your ſaucy jeſting, Sirrah, and ſee that you provide me a good ſupper.

Jamts. That may be done, Sir, with a good deal of money.

Love. What, always money! Can you ſay nothing elſe but money, money, money?——All my ſervants, my children, my relations can pronounce no other word but money.

James. Why, Sir, "how many will there be at table?"

Love. About eight or ten; but I will have a ſupper dreſſed but for eight; for if there be enough for eight, there is enough for ten.

James Suppoſe, Sir, you have at one end of the table a good handſome ſoup; at the other a fine Weſtphalia ham and chickens; on one ſide a fillet of veal, roaſted; and on the other a turkey, or rather a buſtard, which I believe may be bought for a guinea or thereabouts.

Love. What! is the fellow providing an entertainment for my Lord Mayor and the Court of Aldermen?

James. Then, Sir, for the ſecond courſe, a haſh of pheaſants, a leaſh of fat poulards, half a dozen partridges, one dozen of quails, two dozen of ortolans, three dozen———

Love (putting his hand before James's mouth). Ah, villain! you are eating up all I am worth.

James. Then a ragout———

Love (ſtopping his mouth again). Hold your extravagant tongue. Such ſervants as you ſhould be reminded of that excellent ſaying of a very wiſe man, We muſt eat to live, not live to eat. See and provide ſomething to clog their ſtomachs: let there be

two

two great dishes of soup-meagre, a good large suet-pudding, some dainty fat pork-pye, or pastry, a fine small breast of mutton, a sallad, and a copious dish of potatoes, which will make plenty and variety enough. Be sure there be plenty of soup and potatoes—be sure of that.——Now I will go and pay a visit to my money.

[*Exeunt.*

RAMILIE *and* LAPETT, *meeting.*

Ram. Well, Madam, what success? "Have I "been a false prophet, and have you come at the "old hunks's purse? or have I spoken like an oracle, "and he is as close-fisted as usual?"

Lap. Never was a person of my function so used: all my rhetoric availed nothing. While I was talking to him about the lady he smiled and was pleased, but the moment I mentioned money to him his countenance changed, and he understood not one word that was said. But now, Ramilie, what do you think this affair is that I am transacting?

Ram. Nay, Mrs. Lappet, now you are putting too severe a task upon me. How is it possible, in the vast variety of affairs which you honour with taking into your hands, that I should be able to guess which is so happy as to employ your immediate thoughts?

Lap. Let me tell you then, sweet Sir! that I am transacting an affair between your master's mistress and her father.

Ram. What affair?

Lap. What should it be but the old one, matrimony? In short, your master and his father are rivals.

Ram.

Ram. I am glad on't, and I wiſh the old gentleman ſucceſs with all my heart.

Lap. How! are you your maſter's enemy?

Ram. No, Madam, I am ſo much his friend that I had rather he ſhould loſe his miſtreſs than his humble ſervant, which muſt be the caſe, for I am determined againſt a married family. I will never be ſervant to any man who is not his own maſter.

Lap. Why, truly, when one conſiders the caſe thoroughly, I muſt be of opinion that it would be more your maſter's intereſt to be this lady's ſon-in-law, than her huſband; for, in the firſt place, ſhe has but little fortune; and if ſhe was once married to his ſon, I dare ſwear the old gentleman would never forgive the diſappointment of his love.

Ram. And is the old gentleman in love?

Lap. Oh, profoundly! delightfully! Oh, that you had but ſeen him as I have! with his feet tottering, his eyes watering, his teeth chattering! his old trunk was ſhaken with a fit of love, juſt as if it had been a fit of an ague.

Ram. He will have more cold fits than hot, I believe.

Lap. Is it not more advantageous for him to have a mother-in-law that ſhould open her father's heart to him, than a wife that would ſhut it againſt him? Beſides, it will be better for us all; for if the huſband were as covetous as the devil, he could not ſtop the hands of an extravagant wife: ſhe will always have it in her power to reward thoſe who keep her ſecrets; and when the huſband is old enough to be the wife's grandfather, ſhe has always ſecrets that are worth concealing; ſo faith I will e'en ſet about that in earneſt which I have hitherto intended only as a jeſt.

Ram. "But do you think you can prevail with "her? will she not be apt to think she loses that, "by the exchange which he cannot make her amends "for?"

Lap. "Ah, Ramilie! the difficulty is not so "great to perfuade a woman to follow her interest: "we generally have that more at heart than you "men imagine; besides, we are extremely apt to "listen to one another: and whether you would "lead a woman to ruin, or preserve her from it, the "surest way of doing either, is by one of her own "sex. We are generally decoyed into the net by "birds of our own feathers."

Ram. Well, if you do succeed in your undertaking, you will allow this I hope—that I first put it into your head.

Lap. Yes, it is true, you did mention it first; but I thought of it first, I am sure; I must have thought of it: but I will not lose a moment's time; for notwithstanding all I have said young men are devils.——Besides, this has a most plausible tongue, and should he get access to Mariana, may do in a few minutes what I shall never be able to undo as long as I live. [*Exit.*

Ram. There goes the glory of all chambermaids. *Exit.*

FREDERICK *and* RAMILIE.

Fred. How! Lappet my enemy! and can she attempt to forward Mariana's marriage with my father?

Ram. Sir, upon my honour it is true.

Fred. Go, fetch Lappet hither; I'll try if I can't bring her over.

Ram.

Ram. Bring her over! a fig for her, Sir!—I have a plot worth fifty of your's. I'll blow her up with your father: I'll make him believe juſt the contrary of every word ſhe has told him.

Fred. Can you do that?

Ram. Never fear it, Sir, I warrant my lies keep even pace with her's. Fear nothing, Sir, Ramilie is your friend. [*Exit.*

Fred. If impudence can give a title to ſucceſs, I am ſure thou haſt a good one.

Enter LAPPET.

Ha! Lappet!

Lap. Hey-day! Mr. Frederick, you look as melancholy as if there were a funeral going on in the houſe inſtead of a wedding.

Fred. Miſtreſs, undo immediately what you have done; prevent this match which you have forwarded, or———

Lap. For Heaven's ſake, Sir! you do not intend to kill me?

Fred. What could drive your villainy to attempt to rob me of the woman I dote on more than life?

Lap. Be but appeas'd, Sir, and let me recover out of this terrible fright you have put me into, and I will engage to make you eaſy yet.

Fred. But haſt thou not already irretrieveably carried it?

Lap. Alas, Sir! I never did any thing yet ſo effectually but that I have been capable of undoing it.

Fred. Conſider how very precious our time is, ſince the marriage is intended this morning.

Lap. That cannot be, nor it ſhall not be.

Fred. How will you prevent it?

Lap. By an infallible rule I have. But, Sir, one goes about a thing with ſo much better a will, and one has ſo much better luck in it too, when one has got ſome little matter by it, that———

Fred. Here, take all the money I have in my pocket, and on my marriage with Mariana thou ſhalt have fifty more.

Lap. That is enough, Sir.—Oh, there is nothing like gold to quicken a woman's capacity.

Exeunt.

Enter LOVEGOLD *and* LAPPET.

Lap. Oh, unhappy miſerable creature that I am! what ſhall I do? whither ſhall I go?

Love. What's the matter, Lappet?

Lap. I ſhall never forgive myſelf; I ſhall never outlive it; I ſhall never eat, drink, ſleep—(*runs againſt him*).

Love. One would think you were walking in your ſleep now. What can be the meaning of this?

Lap. Oh, Sir!—you are undone, Sir! and I am undone!

Love. How! what! has any one robbed me? have I loſt any thing?

Lap. No, Sir; but you have got ſomething?

Love. What? what?

Lap. A wife, Sir.

Love. No, I have not yet——but why———

Lap. How, Sir! are you not married?

Love.

Love. No.

Lap. That is the happieſt word I ever heard out of your mouth.

Love. I have, for ſome particular reaſons, put off the match for a few days.

Lap. Yes, Sir; and for ſome particular reaſons you ſhall put off the match for a few years.

Love. What do you ſay?

Lap. Oh, Sir! this affair has almoſt determined me never to engage in matrimonial matters again.—I have been finely deceived in this lady! I told you, Sir, ſhe had an eſtate in a certain country; but I find it is all a cheat, Sir; not one acre has ſhe.

Love. How! not any eſtate at all! how can ſhe live then?

Lap. Nay, Sir, Heaven knows how half the people in this town live.

Love. However, it is an excellent good quality in a woman to be able to live without an eſtate.——She that can make ſomething out of nothing will make a little go a great way. I am ſorry ſhe has no fortune; but conſidering all her ſaving qualities, Lappet———

Lap. All an impoſition, Sir; ſhe is the moſt extravagant wretch upon earth.

Love. How! how! extravagant?

Lap. I tell you, Sir, ſhe is extravagance itſelf.

Love. Can it be poſſible after what you have told me?

Lap. "Alas, Sir! that was only a cloak thrown "over her real inclinations."

Love. How was it poſſible for you to be deceived in her?

Lap. Alas, Sir! ſhe would have deceived any one upon earth, even you yourſelf; for, Sir, during a whole fortnight, ſince you have been in love with her, ſhe has made it her whole buſineſs to conceal her extravagance, and appear thrifty.

Love. That is a good ſign though, Lappet, let me tell you that is a good ſign; right habits as well as wrong are got by affecting them: and ſhe who could be thrifty a fortnight gives lively hopes that ſhe may be brought to be ſo as long as ſhe lives.

Love. She loves play to diſtraction; it is the only viſible way in the world ſhe has of living.

Love. She muſt win then, Lappet; and play when people play the beſt of the game, is no ſuch very bad thing. Beſides, as ſhe plays only to ſupport herſelf, when ſhe can be ſupported without it, ſhe may leave it off.

Lap. To ſupport her extravagance, in dreſs particularly; why, don't you ſee, Sir, ſhe is dreſſed out to-day like a princeſs?

Love. It may be the effect of prudence in a young woman to dreſs in order to get a huſband; and as that is apparently her motive, when ſhe is married that motive ceaſes; and to ſay the truth, ſhe is in diſcourſe a very prudent young woman.

Lap. Think of her extravagance.

Love. A woman of the greateſt modeſty.

Lap. And extravagance.

Love. She has really a very fine ſet of teeth.

Lap. She will have all the teeth out of your head.

Love. I never ſaw finer eyes.

Lap. She will eat you out of houſe and home.

Love.

Love. Charming hair.

Lap. She will ruin you.

Love. Sweet kiſſing lips, ſwelling breaſts, and the fineſt ſhape that ever was embraced—*(catching Lappet in his arms)*.

Lap. Ah, Sir! I am not the lady—Was ever ſuch an old goat!———Well, Sir, I ſee you are determined on the match, and ſo I deſire you would pay me my wages. I cannot bear to ſee the ruin of a family in which I have lived ſo long that I have contracted as great a friendſhip for it as if it was my own: I can't bear to ſee waſte, riot, and extravagance; to ſee all the wealth, a poor honeſt induſtrious gentleman has been raiſing all his lifetime, ſquandered away in a year or two in feaſts, balls, muſic, cards, clothes, jewels—It would break my heart to ſee my poor old maſter eat out by a ſet of ſingers, fiddlers, milliners, mantua-makers, mercers, toy-men, jewellers, fops, cheats, rakes—to ſee his guineas fly about like duſt; all his ready money paid in one morning to one tradeſman; his whole ſtock in the funds ſpent in one half year; all his land ſwallowed down in another; all his old gold, nay, the very plate which he has had in his family time out of mind, which has deſcended from father to ſon ever ſince the flood, " to ſee even that diſpoſed of." What will they have next I wonder, when they have had all he is worth in the world, and left the poor old man without any thing to furniſh his old age with the neceſſaries of life? Will they be contented then? or will they tear out his bowels and eat them too!—*(Both burſt into tears)*.—The laws are cruel to put it in the power of a wife to ruin her huſband in this manner. And will any one tell me that ſuch a woman as this is handſome? What are a pair of ſhining eyes, when they muſt be bought with the loſs of one's ſhining old gold?

Love.

Love. Ah, my poor old gold!

Lap. Perhaps ſhe has a fine ſet of teeth.

Love. My poor plate, that I have hoarded up with ſo much care!

Lap. Or I'll grant ſhe may have a beautiful ſhape.

Love. My dear lands and tenements.

Lap. What are the roſes on her cheeks, or lilies in her neck?

Love. My poor India bonds, bearing at leaſt three and an half per cent.!

Lap. A fine excuſe indeed, when a man is ruined by his wife, to tell us, he has married a beauty!

Enter LAWYER.

Law. Sir, the contract is ready; my client has ſent for the counſel on the other ſide, and he is now below examining it.

Love. Get you out of my doors, you villain! you and your client too; I'll contract you with a pox!

Law. Hey-day? ſure you are non compos mentis.

Love. No, Sirrah! I had like to have been non compos mentis, but I have had the good luck to eſcape it. Go and tell your client, I have diſcovered her; bid her take her advantageous offer, for I ſhall ſign no contracts.

Law. This is the ſtrangeſt thing I have met with in my whole courſe of practice.

Love. I am very much obliged to you, Lappet; indeed I am very much obliged to you.

Lap.

Lap. I am ſure, Sir, I have great ſatisfaction in ſerving you, and I hope you will conſider of that little affair that I mentioned to you to-day about my law-ſuit.

Love. I am very much obliged to you.

Lap. I hope, Sir, you would not ſuffer me to be ruined, when I have preſerved you from it.

Love. Hey?—(*appearing deaf*).

Lap. You know, Sir, that in Weſtminſter-hall money and right are always on the ſame ſide.

Love. Ay, ſo they are; very true, ſo they are; and therefore no one can take too much care of his money.

Lap. The ſmalleſt matter of money, Sir, would do me an infinite ſervice.

Love. Hey! what?

Lap. A ſmall matter of money, Sir, would do me a great kindneſs.

Love. Oho! I have a very great kindneſs for you; indeed I have a very great kindneſs for you.

Lap. Pox take ſuch kindneſs!—I'm only loſing time; there's nothing to be got out of him; ſo I'll even go to Frederick, and ſee what the report of my ſucceſs will do then. Ah, would I were married to thee myſelf! [*Exit.*

Love. What a prodigious eſcape have I had! I cannot look at the precipice without being giddy.

Enter RAMILIE.

Love. Who is that?—Oh, is it you, Sirrah? how dare you enter within theſe walls?

Ram.

Ram. Truly, Sir, I can ſcarcely reconcile it to myſelf: I think after what has happened you have no great title to my friendſhip; but I don't know how it is, Sir, there is ſomething or other about you which ſtrangely engages my affections, and which, together, with the friendſhip I have for your ſon, won't let me ſuffer you to be impoſed upon; and to prevent that, Sir, is the whole and ſole occaſion of my coming within your doors. Did not a certain lady, called Lappet, depart from you juſt now, Sir?

Love. What if ſhe did, Sirrah?

Ram. Has ſhe not, Sir, been talking to you of a young lady whoſe name is Mariana?

Love. Well, and what then?

Ram. Why then, Sir, every ſingle ſyllable ſhe has told you has been neither more nor leſs than a confounded lie, as is indeed every word ſhe ſays; for I don't believe, upon a modeſt calculation, ſhe has told ſix truths ſince ſhe has been in the houſe. She is made up of lies: her father was an attorney, and her mother was chambermaid to a maid of honour: the firſt word ſhe ſpoke was a lie, and ſo will be the laſt. I know ſhe has pretended a great affection for you, that's one lie, and many things ſhe has ſaid of Mariana is another.

Love. How! how! are you ſure of this?

Ram. Why, Sir, ſhe and I laid the plot together; that one time indeed I myſelf was forced to deviate a little from the truth; but it was with a good deſign, the jade pretended to me that it was out of friendſhip to my maſter; that it was becauſe ſhe thought ſuch a match would not be at all to his intereſt; but, alas, Sir! I know her friendſhip begins and ends at home, "and that ſhe has friendſhip "for no perſon living but herſelf." Why, Sir, do

but

but look at Mariana, Sir, and ſee whether you can think her ſuch a ſort of woman as ſhe has deſcribed her to you.

Love. Indeed ſhe has appeared to me always in a different light. I do believe what you ſay. This jade has been bribed by my ſon to impoſe upon me. I forgive thee all that thou haſt ever done for this one ſervice: I will go and deny all that I ſaid to the Lawyer, and put an end to every thing this moment. I knew it was impoſſible ſhe could be ſuch a ſort of woman. [*Exit.*

Ram. And I will go find out my maſter; make him the happieſt of mankind; ſqueeze his purſe; and then get drunk for the honour of all party-coloured politicians. [*Exit.*

Enter FREDERICK *and* LAPPET.

Fred. Excellent Lappet! I ſhall never think I have ſufficiently rewarded you for what you have done.

Lap. I have only done half the buſineſs yet:—I have, I believe, effectually broke off the match with your father. Now, Sir, I ſhall make up the matter between you and Mariana.

Fred. Do but that, dear girl! and I'll coin myſelf into guineas.

Lap. Keep yourſelf for your lady, Sir; ſhe will take all that ſort of coin; as for me, I ſhall be much more eaſily contented.

Fred. But what hopes can'ſt thou have? for I, alas! ſee none.

Lap. Oh, Sir! it is more eaſy to make half a dozen matches than to break one; and to ſay the truth, it is an office I like better. But methinks I want

I want to have the hurricane begin; I am ſurprized they are not all together by the ears already.

Enter RAMILIE.

Ram. Oh, Madam, I little expected to have found you and my maſter together after what has happened; I did not think you had the aſſurance—

Fred. Peace, Ramilie! all is well, and Lappet is the beſt friend I have in the world.

Ram. Yes, Sir, all is well indeed; no thanks to her: "happy is the maſter that has a good ſervant; "a good ſervant is certainly the greateſt treaſure in "this world: I have done the buſineſs for you, Sir; "I have fruſtrated all ſhe has been doing, denied "all ſhe has been telling." In ſhort, Sir, I obſerved her ladyſhip in a long conference with the old gentleman, mightily to your intereſt as you imagine; no ſooner was ſhe gone than I ſteps in, and made the old gentleman believe every ſingle ſyllable ſhe had told him to be a moſt confounded lie; and away he is gone, fully determined to put an end to the affair.

Lap. And ſign the contract: So now, Sir, you are ruined without reprieve.

Fred Nothing but my curſed ſtars could have contrived ſuch an accident.

Ram. You cannot blame me, Sir, whatever has happened.

Fred. I don't blame you, Sir, nor myſelf, nor any one. Fortune has marked me out for miſery: but I will be no longer idle: ſince I am to be ruined, I'll meet my deſtruction. [*Exit.*

[*They ſtand ſome time in ſilence, looking at each other.*]

Lap.

Lap. I give you joy, Sir, of the ſucceſs of your negotiation; you have approved yourſelf a moſt able politician truly; and I dare ſwear when your abilities are once known, you will not want employment.

Ram. Do not triumph, good Mrs. Lappet! a politician may make a blunder; I am ſure no one can avoid it that is employed with you, for you change ſides ſo often, that 'tis impoſſible to tell at any time which you are on.

Lap. And pray, Sir, what was the occaſion of betraying me to your maſter, for he has told me all?

Ram. Conſcience, conſcience! Mrs. Lappet—the great guide of all actions: I could not find in my heart to let him loſe his miſtreſs.

Lap. Your maſter is very much obliged to you, indeed, to loſe your own, in order to preſerve his. From henceforth I forbid all your addreſſes, I diſown all obligations, I revoke all promiſes; henceforth I would adviſe you never to open your lips to me, for if you do, it will be in vain: I ſhall be deaf to all your little, falſe, mean, treacherous, baſe inſinuations. I would have you know, Sir, a woman injured as I am never can, nor ought, to forgive. Never ſee my face again.

[*Exit.*

Ram. Huh! now would ſome lovers think themſelves very unhappy; but I, who have had experience in the ſex, am never frightened at the frowns of a miſtreſs, nor raviſhed with her ſmiles; they both naturally ſucceed one another; and a woman generally is as ſure to perform what ſhe threatens as what ſhe promiſes. I'm convinced this old rogue has money hid in the garden; if I can but diſcover it, I ſhall handſomely quit all ſcores with the old

gentleman, and make my maſter a ſufficient return for the loſs of his miſtreſs. *Exit.*

Enter FREDERICK *and* RAMILIE.

Ram. Follow me, Sir—follow me this inſtant.

Fred. What's the matter?

Ram. Follow me, Sir; we are in the right box; the buſineſs is done.

Fred. What done?

Ram. I have it under my arm, Sir—here it is!

Fred. What? what?

Ram. Your father's ſoul, Sir, his money—— Follow me, Sir, this moment, before we are overtaken.

Fred. Ha! this may preſerve me yet.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter LOVEGOLD, *in the utmoſt diſtraction.*

Love. Thieves! thieves! aſſaſſination! murder! I am undone! all my money is gone! who is the thief? where is the villain? where is the villain! where ſhall I find him? Give me my money again, villain—*(catching himſelf by the arm)*—I am diſtracted! I know not where I am, nor what I do. Oh, my money, my money! Ha! what ſay you? Alack-a-day! here is no one. The villain muſt have watched his time carefully; he muſt have done it while I was ſigning that damn'd contract. I will go to a juſtice, and have all my houſe put to their oaths, my ſervants, my ſon, my miſtreſs, and myſelf too; all the people in the houſe, and in the ſtreet, and in the town,

town, I will have them all executed; I will hang up all the world; and if I don't find my money, I will hang myſelf.

Enter MARIANA, FURNISH, *and* Mrs. WISELY.

Mrs. Wiſely. I proteſt, child, I cannot ſee any reaſon for this alteration.

Mar. Dear Mamma! let me have my will.—— There is not any one thing in the whole houſe that I ſhall be able to have in it, every thing has ſo much of antiquity about it, and I cannot endure the ſight of any thing that is not perfectly modern.

Furniſh. Your ladyſhip is in the right, Madam; there is no poſſibility of being in the faſhion without new furniſhing a houſe at leaſt once in twenty years; and indeed to be at the very top of the faſhion you will have need of almoſt continual alterations.

Enter SATTIN *and* SPARKLE.

Mar. Oh, Mr. Sattin! have you brought thoſe gold ſtuffs I ordered you?

Sat. Yes, Madam—I have brought your ladyſhip ſome of the fineſt patterns that were ever made.

Mar. Well, Mr. Sparkle, have you the necklace and ear-rings with you?

Sparkle. Yes, Madam, and I defy any jeweller in town to ſhew you their equals; they are, I think, the fineſt water I ever ſaw; they are finer than the Ducheſs of Glitters's, which have been ſo much admired: I have brought you a ſolitaire too, Madam; my Lady Ruffle bought the fellow of it yeſterday.

Mar. Sure it has a flaw in it, Sir.

Sparkle. Has it, Madam? then there never was a brilliant without one: I am ſure, Madam, I bought it for a good ſtone, and if it be not a good ſtone you ſhall have it for nothing.

Enter LOVEGOLD.

Love. 'Tis loſt, 'tis gone, 'tis irrecoverable; I ſhall never ſee it more!

Mar. And what will be the loweſt price of the necklace and ear-rings?

Sparkle. If you were my ſiſter, Madam, I could not bate you one farthing of three thouſand guineas.

Love. What do you ſay of three thouſand guineas, villain? have you my three thouſand guineas?

Mrs. Wiſely. Bleſs me, Mr. Lovegold! what's the matter?

Love. I am undone! I am ruined! my money is ſtolen! my dear three thouſand guineas that I received but yeſterday are taken away from the place I had put them in, and I ſhall never ſee them again!

Mar. Don't let them make you uneaſy, you may poſſibly recover them, or if you ſhould not, the loſs is but a trifle.

Love. How! a trifle! do you call three thouſand guineas a trifle?

Mrs. Wiſely. She ſees you ſo diſturbed that ſhe is willing to make as light of your loſs as poſſible in order to comfort you.

Love. To comfort me! can ſhe comfort me by calling three thouſand guineas a trifle? But tell me what were you ſaying of them? have you ſeen them?

Sparkle.

Sparkle. Really, Sir, I do not underſtand you; I was telling the lady the price of a necklace, and a pair of earrings, which were as cheap at three thouſand guineas as——

Love. How! what? what?

Mar. I cannot think them very cheap; however, I am reſolved to have them; ſo let him have the money, Sir, if you pleaſe.

Love. I am in a dream!

Mar. You will be paid immediately, Sir.—— Well, Mr. Sattin, and pray what is the higheſt priced gold ſtuff you have brought?

Sat. Madam, I have one at twelve pounds a yard.

Mar. It muſt be pretty at that price; let me have a gown and petticoat cut off.

Love. You ſhall cut off my head firſt. What are you doing? are you mad?

Mar. I am only preparing a proper dreſs to appear in as your wife.

Love. Sirrah, offer to open any of your pickpocket trinkets here, and I'll make an example of you.

Mar. Mr. Lovegold, give me leave to tell you, this is a behaviour I don't underſtand: you give me a fine pattern before marriage of the uſage I am to expect after it.

Love. Here are fine patterns of what I am to expect after it.

Mar. I aſſure you, Sir, I ſhall inſiſt on all the privileges of an Engliſh wife: I ſhall not be taught to dreſs by my huſband; I am myſelf the beſt judge of what you can afford; and if I do ſtretch your

purſe a little, it is for your honour, Sir; the world will know it is your wife that makes ſuch a figure.

Love. Can you bear to hear this, Madam?

Mrs. Wiſely. I ſhould not countenance my daughter in any extravagance, Sir; "but the honour of my family as well as your's is concerned, in appearing handſomely. She will never run you into unneceſſary expences; ſo far from it, that if you will but generouſly make her a preſent of five thouſand pounds to fit herſelf out at firſt in clothes and jewels, I dare ſwear you will not have any other demands on thoſe accounts,——I don't know when.

Mar. No, unleſs a birth-night ſuit or two, I ſhall ſcarce want any thing more this twelve-month.

Love. I am undone, plundered, murdered!—however there is one comfort, I am not married yet.

Mar. And free to chuſe whether you will marry at all, or no.

Mrs. Wiſely. The conſequence, you know, will be no more than a poor ten thouſand pounds, which is all the forfeiture of the breach of contract.

Love. But, Madam, I have one way yet: I have not bound my heirs and executors, ſo if I hang myſelf I am off the bargain—In the mean while I'll try if I cannot rid my houſe of this neſt of thieves—Get out of my doors, you cut-purſes.

Sparkle. Pay me for my jewels, Sir, or return 'em me.

Love. Give him his baubles, give them him.

Mar. I ſhall not, I aſſure you. You need be under no apprehenſion, Sir; you ſee Mr. Lovegold is a little diſordered at preſent, but if you will come to-morrow you ſhall have your money.

Sparkle.

Sparkle. I'll depend on your ladyſhip, madam.

Love. Who the devil are you? what have you to do here?

Furniſh. I am an upholſterer Sir, and am come to new furniſh your houſe.

Love. Out of my doors this inſtant, or I will diſfurniſh your head for you; I'll beat out your brains.

Mrs. Wiſe. Sure, Sir, you are mad!

Love. I was when I ſigned the contract. Oh, that I had never learnt to write my name!

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. Madam, the tailor whom your ladyſhip ſent for is come.

Mar. Bid him come in. This is an inſtance of the regard I have for you. I have ſent for one of the beſt tailors in town to make you a new ſuit of cloaths that you may appear like a gentleman; for as it is for your honor that I ſhould be well dreſſed, ſo it is for mine that you ſhould. Come, Madam, we will go in, and give further orders concerning the entertainment.

[*Exeunt Mrs. Wiſely and Mariana.*

Enter LIST.

Love. Oh Lappet, Lappet! the time thou haſt propheſied of, is come to paſs.

Liſt. I am your honor's moſt humble ſervant. My name is Liſt: I preſume I am the perſon you ſent for.—The laceman will be here immediately. Will your honor be pleaſed to be taken meaſure of firſt, or look over the patterns? if you pleaſe we will take meaſure

meaſure firſt. I do not know Sir, who was ſo kind as to recommend me to you, but I believe I ſhall give you entire ſatisfaction. I may defy any tailor in England to underſtand the faſhion better than myſelf; the thing is impoſſible Sir. I always viſit France twice a year, and tho' I ſay it, that ſhould not ſay it.——Stand upright, if you pleaſe, Sir——

Love. I'll take meaſure of your back, ſirrah—— I'll teach ſuch pickpockets as you are to come here ——Out of my doors, villain.

Liſt. Hey-dey Sir! did you ſend to me for this Sir? I ſhall bring you in a bill without any cloaths. [*Exit.*

Love. Oh! oh, what ſhall I do?

Enter LAPPET.

Lap. Where is my poor maſter? Oh, Sir, I cannot expreſs the affliction I am in to ſee you devoured in this manner. How could you, Sir, when I told you what a woman ſhe was, how could you undo yourſelf, with your eyes open?

Love. Poor Lappet! had I taken your advice I had been happy.

Lap. And I too Sir; for a lack-a-day! I am as miſerable as you are; I feel every thing for you, Sir; indeed I ſhall break my heart upon your account.

Love. I ſhall be much obliged to you if you do, Lappet.

Lap. How could a man of your ſenſe, Sir, marry in ſo precipitate a manner?

Love. I am not married; I am not married.

Lap. Not married!

Love.

Love. No, no, no.

Lap. All's ſafe yet. No man is quite undone till he is married.

Love. I am, I am undone. Oh Lappet! I cannot tell it thee. I have given her a bond, a bond, a bond, of ten thouſand pounds to marry her!

Lap. You ſhall forfeit it—

Love. Forfeit what? my life, and ſoul, and blood, and heart!

Lap. You ſhall forfeit it.

Love. I'll be buried alive ſooner. No, I am determined I'll marry her firſt, and hang myſelf afterwards to ſave my money.

Lap. I ſee, Sir, you are undone; and if you ſhould hang yourſelf, I would not blame you.

Love. Could I but ſave one thouſand by it I would hang myſelf with all my ſoul. Shall I live to die not worth a groat?

Lap. Oh, my poor maſter, my poor maſter! [*crying.*

Love. Why did I not die a year ago! what a deal had I ſaved by dying a year ago! [*A noiſe without.*] Oh! oh! dear Lappet! ſee what it is; I ſhall be undone in an hour.———oh!

Enter LAPPET.

Love. Oh Lappet! what's the matter?

Lap. Oh Sir! I am ſcarce able to tell you. It is ſpread about the town that you are married, and your wife's creditors are coming in whole flocks. There is one ſingle debt for five thouſand pounds, which an attorney is without to demand.

Love.

Love. Oh! oh! let them cut my throat.

Lap. Think what an eſcape you have had! think if you had married her.

Love. I am as bad as married to her.

Lap. It is impoſſible Sir; nothing can be ſo bad: what you are to pay her ten thouſand pounds—— Well——and ten thouſand pounds are a ſum; they are a ſum, I own it——they are a ſum; but what is ſuch a ſum compared with ſuch a wife? had you married her in a week you would have been in priſon, Sir———

Love. If I am I can keep my money; they can't take that from me.

Lap. "Why, Sir, you will loſe twice the value "of your contract before you know how to turn "yourſelf, and if you have no value for liberty, yet "conſider, Sir, ſuch is the great goodneſs of our "laws that a priſon is one of the deareſt places you "can live in.

Love. "Ten thouſand pounds!—no—I'll be "hanged, I'll be hanged".

Lap. Suppoſe it were poſſible, Sir, (not that I believe it is) but ſuppoſe it were poſſible to make her abate a little; ſuppoſe one could bring her to eight thouſand.

Love. Eight thouſand devils take her———

Lap. But, dear Sir, conſider, nay, conſider immediately, for every minute you loſe you loſe a ſum ——Let me beg you, entreat you, my dear good maſter! let me prevail on you, not to be ruined. Be reſolute, Sir; conſider every guinea you give ſaves you give ſaves you a ſcore.

Love. Well, if ſhe will conſent to, to, eight hundred.—But try, do try, if you can make her 'bate any

any thing of that—if you can—you ſhall have a twentieth part of what ſhe 'bates yourſelf.

Lap. Why, Sir, if I could get you off at eight thouſand, you ought to leap out of your ſkin for joy.

Love. Would I were out of my ſkin!

Lap. You will have more occaſion to wiſh ſo when you are in the hands of bailiffs for your wife's debts.

Love. Why was I begotten! why was I born! why was I brought up! why was I not knocked o' th' head before I knew the value of money.

Lap. (knocking without). So, ſo, more duns, I ſuppoſe. Go but into the kitchen, Sir, or the hall, and it will have a better effect on you than all I can ſay.

Love. What have I brought myſelf to! what ſhall I do! Part with eight thouſand pounds—— miſery, deſtruction, beggary, priſons!—But then, on the other ſide are wife, ruin, chains, ſlavery, torment! I ſhall run diſtracted either way. [*Exit.*

Lap. Ah, would we could once prove you ſo, you old, covetous, good for nothing.

Enter MARIANA.

Mar. Well, what ſucceſs?

Lap. It is impoſſible to tell; he is juſt gone into the kitchen, where, if he is not frightened into our deſigns, I ſhall begin to deſpair. They ſay fear will make a coward brave, but nothing can make him generous; the very fear of loſing all he is worth will ſcarce bring him to part with a penny.

Mar. And have you not acquainted Frederick with my intentions?

Lap. No, I aſſure you. Ah, Madam, had I not been able to have kept a ſecret I had never brought about

about thoſe affairs that I have: were I not ſecret, Lud have mercy upon many a virtuous woman's reputation in this town.

Mar. And don't you think I have kept my real intentions very ſecret?

Lap. From every one but me, I believe, you have: I aſſure you I knew them long before you ſent for me this afternoon to diſcover them to me.

Mar. But could you bring him to no terms, no propoſals? Did he make no offer?

Lap. It muſt be done all at once, and while you are by.

Mar. So you think he muſt ſee me, to give every thing to be rid of me.

Lap. Huſh, huſh! I hear him coming again.

Enter LOVEGOLD.

Love. I am undone! I am undone! I am eat up! I am devoured! I have an army of cooks in my houſe.

Lap. Dear Madam! conſider; I know eight thouſand pounds are a trifle! I know they are nothing; my maſter can very well afford them; they will make no hole in his purſe; and if you ſhould ſtand out, you will get more.

Love. (putting his hand before Lappet's mouth). You lie, you lie, you lie, you lie, you lie: ſhe never could get more, never ſhould get more; it is more than I am worth; it is an immenſe ſum; and I will be ſtarved, drowned, ſhot, hanged, burnt, before I part with a penny of it.

Lap. For Heaven's ſake, Sir, you will ruin all—Madam, let me beg you, entreat you, to 'bate theſe two thouſand pounds. Suppoſe a law-ſuit ſhould be the conſequence, I know my maſter would be caſt; I know

I know it would coſt him an immenſe ſum of money, and that he would pay the charges of both in the end: but you might be kept out of it a long time. Eight thouſand pounds now are better than ten five years hence.

Mar. No; the ſatisfaction of my revenge on a man who baſely departs from his word will make amends for the delay, and whatever I ſuffer, as long as I know his ruin will be the conſequence, I am eaſy.

Love. Oh, bloody-minded wretch!

Lap. Why, Sir, ſince ſhe inſiſts on it, what does it ſignify? You know you are in her power, and it will be only throwing away more money to be compelled to it at laſt: get rid of her at once: what are two thouſand pounds?——Why, Sir, the Court of Chancery will eat it up for a breakfaſt: it has been given for a miſtreſs, and will you not give it to be rid of a wife? [*They whiſper.*

Love. How! and will you ſwear a robbery againſt her? that ſhe robbed me of what I ſhall give her?

Lap. Depend on it, Sir.

Love. I'll break open a bureau, to make it look the more likely.

Lap. Do ſo, Sir; but loſe no time; give it her this moment. Madam, my maſter has conſented, and if you have the contract he is ready to pay the money. Be ſure to break open the bureau, Sir——*(aſide)*.

Love. I'll fetch the money; it is all I am worth in the world. [*Exit.*

Mar. Sure he will never be brought to it yet.

Lap. I warrant him: but you are to pay dearer for it than you imagine, for I am to ſwear a robbery againſt you. What will you give me, Madam, to buy off my evidence?

Mar. And is it poſſible that the old rogue would conſent to ſuch a villainy?

Lap. Ay, Madam; for half the ſum he would hang half the town. But truly I can never be made amends for all the pains I have taken on your account. Were I to receive a ſingle guinea a lie for every one I have told this day, it would make me a pretty tolerable fortune. Ah, Madam, what a pity it is that a woman of my excellent talents ſhould be confined to ſo low a ſphere of life as I am! had I been born a great lady, what a deal of good ſhould I have done in the world!

Enter LOVEGOLD.

Love. Here, here they are—all in bank-notes—all the money I am worth in the world.—I have ſent for a conſtable; ſhe muſt not go out of my ſight before we have her taken into cuſtody.—*(aſide to Lappet).*

Lap. (to Lovegold). You have done very wiſely.

Mar. There, Sir, is your contract. And now, Sir, I have nothing to do but to make myſelf as eaſy as I can in my loſs.

Enter FREDERICK.

Love. Oh, my money, my money, my money!

Fred. If this lady does not make you amends for the loſs of your money, reſign over all pretenſions in her to me, and I will engage to get it reſtored to you.

Love. How, Sirrah! are you a confederate, have you helped to rob me?

Fred. Softly, Sir, or you ſhall never ſee your guineas again.

Love. I reſign her over to you entirely, and may you both ſtarve together! ſo go fetch my gold—

Mar. You are eaſily prevailed upon, I ſee, to reſign a right which you have not. But were I to reſign over myſelf, it would hardly be the man's fortune to ſtarve whoſe wife brought him ten thouſand pounds.

Love.

Love. Bear witneſs ſhe has confeſſed ſhe has the money, and I ſhall prove ſhe ſtole it from me. She has broke open my bureau: Lappet is my evidence.

Lap. I hope I ſhall have all your pardons, and particularly your's madam, whom I have injured.

Love. A fig for her pardon, you are doing a right action.

Lap. Then if there was any robbery you muſt have robbed yourſelf. This lady can only be a receiver of ſtolen goods, for I ſaw you give her the money with your own hands.

Love. How! how! what! what!

Lap. And I muſt own it, with ſhame I muſt own it——that the money you gave her in exchange for the contract I promiſed to ſwear ſhe had ſtolen from you.

Love. I am undone, undone, undone!

Fred No Sir, your three thouſand guineas are ſafe yet; depend upon it within an hour you ſhall find them in the ſame place they were firſt depoſited. "I thought to have purchaſed a reprieve with them, "but I find my fortune has of itſelf beſtowed that "on me."

Love. Give 'em me, give 'em me this inſtant—— but then the ten thouſand, where are they?

Mar. Where they ought to be, in the hands of one who I think deſerves them. [*Gives them to Frederick*] You ſee, Sir, I have no deſign to the prejudice of your family: nay, I have proved the beſt friend you ever had; for I preſume you are now thoroughly cured of your longing for a young wife.

Love. Sirrah! give me my notes, give me my notes.

Fred.

Fred. You muſt excuſe me Sir; I can part with nothing I receive from this lady.

Love. Then I will go to law with that lady, and you, and all of you; for I will have them again, if law, or juſtice, or injuſtice will give them me.

Fred. Be pacified, Sir; I think the lady has acted nobly in giving that back again into your family which ſhe might have carried out of it.

Love. My family be hanged! if I am robbed I don't care who robs me. I would as ſoon hang my ſon as another—and I will hang him if he does not reſtore me all I have loſt; for I would not give half the ſum to ſave the whole world——I will go and employ all the lawyers in town, for I will have my money again or never ſleep more. [*Exit.*

Fred. I am reſolved we will get the better of him now. But oh Mariana! your generoſity is much greater in beſtowing this ſum, than my happineſs in receiving it. From what I have ſeen lately I think riches are rather to be feared than wiſhed; at leaſt I am ſure avarice, which too often attends wealth, is a greater evil than any that is found in poverty. Miſery is generally the end of all vice, but it is the very mark at which avarice ſeems to aim: the miſer endeavours to be wretched;

He hoards eternal cares within his purſe,
And what he wiſhes moſt, proves moſt his curſe.

FINIS.